

Georgia Department of Community Health
Office of Health Improvement
Women's Health Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2007
2 Peachtree St., 34th Floor

Members Present:

Ellen Williams, JD, Chair
Lesa Walden-Young, MD
Gael E. Gilbert, RN
Sarah E. Lang

Jaime Kaplan
Phylecia Wilson
Gina P. Lundberg, MD, FACC

Members Absent:

Jean Wright, MD

DCH Staff:

James T. Peoples
Lynn Christian

James Peoples opened the meeting by introducing himself as the Executive Director of the Office of Health Improvement, which is the office that the Women's Health Advisory Council falls under. Mr. Peoples will be the staff lead person working with the council as the office moves forward the rest of the year developing an agenda and a plan. Paulette Poole will be our lead liaison that works with Mr. Peoples on all women's health issues. Mr. Peoples also announced that the Governor appointed Ellen Williams to be the chairperson for the Women's Health Advisory Council.

Mr. Peoples turned the meeting over to the chairperson. Ms. Williams opened the meeting up to the members to introduce themselves.

- ❖ ***Ellen Williams*** – Ms. Williams is a lobbyist. She represents the Cancer Society, Southern Regional Health Systems, the March of Dimes and other health and children related organizations. Last year she went through her own bout with breast cancer.
- ❖ ***Lesa Walden-Young, M. D.*** – Director of the GA Department of the Human Resources, Live Healthy Georgia Campaign (joint effort between the Governor's office and the Department of Human Resources exploring ways to reduce the risk of chronic disease in Georgia). Dr. Lesa lived in Southern California for 16 years before moving to Georgia. She worked as a television/radio/theatre/film producer and writer as a family medicine physician.
- ❖ ***Gael Gilbert*** – Works for Southern Regional Medical Center – Assistant Vice-president at Southern Regional for Nursing. Her concern for the health of women and children led her to a career in nursing. Some of her professional work

- activities include practice management, public health, district health nursing, nursing school health, bedside nursing, etc.
- ❖ **Lynn Christian** introduced herself as the Commission on Men's Health Liaison. She expressed that women are the driving force behind men's health.
 - ❖ **Sarah Lang** - CEO of Valley Healthcare System, Inc., a federally funded community health center. She has been in GA for 12 years. She has worked in community health close to 30 years. Started in rural West Virginia.
 - ❖ **Jaime Kaplan** – She is from Macon, GA and a tennis instructor. Has played tennis for about 36 years. Played professionally. She is involved with several charity events including Ladies Pink Ribbon Golf tournament involved with the Cancer Society in Macon. Tourney of Events which is a battered women's shelter and homeless Men's shelter. She also works with Children's hospital.
 - ❖ **Phylecia Wilson** – resides in Clarkesville, GA and has a business in Lawrenceville where her current venture is helping to promote the City of Lawrenceville. Has been a volunteer with the American Cancer Society for about 32 years. She is a cancer survivor (Leukemia) and currently in remission and has been for about 6 years. Over the last few years has committed more to advocacy on the local, state, and federal level.
 - ❖ **Gina Lundberg, M.D.** – Private practice Cardiologist; Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine at Emory and she also teaches at Grady on a part time basis. On the board of the American Heart Association since 2000; works on the Go Red Campaign. She is the chairperson for all Go Red Campaign events. Started the women's heart center at Northside Hospital. She is now the Director of the Women's Heart Center at St. Joseph's, which will open in June.

Ellen Williams spoke about the Governor's expectations for the group. She explained that the Governor wants the Advisory Council to be active participants in the activities of the office and work collaboratively with the department to try to add focus and to be a part of helping develop policy. She stated that the Advisory Council has been brought together to determine what those policy goals are as a group.

Mr. Peoples directed the group to the handouts in the Advisory Council packets. He began by explaining how the Office of Women's Health was created. He explained that when the Department of Community Health was created in 1999, language was also written into the statute creating an Office of Women's Health. He went on to say that the Office of Women's Health Advisory Council is legislatively authorized and has a legislative authority to make policy recommendations to the department. Dr. Dee Baldwin was appointed the first Executive Director and served in that capacity from 1999 – 2003.

Mr. Peoples discussed the vision, mission, goals and functions of the office. He mentioned to the group that there was a mission and vision statement currently in effect but the Advisory Council could establish their own mission and vision statements if they wished. He discussed the goals, which are in the legislative statute, the state comprehensive plan completed in 2003, and the women's health summit which was an

annual event. The council had some discussion on the non-reproductive statement in the goals.

The question was raised if there was an evaluation of the last strategic plan and if the council could review the current plan. Dr. Lesa mentioned that women's health stakeholders are responsible for getting the plan and implementing the plan. She said that the council should look at how the benchmarks of the plan are being met and how the benchmarks are applied to the works that have been done. She agreed to assist the council as it relates to implementation.

Mr. Peoples gave a brief background on the Department of Community Health. He explained that DCH is the state agency that oversees the state Medicaid program and the Peach Care for kids program.

Mr. Peoples explained to the Advisory Council that the Office of Health Improvement will focus on and develop strategies aimed at four health disparities. The four disparity areas are Cardiovascular Disease/Stroke, Diabetes, Cancer and HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Peoples asked the Council to discuss the mission and vision statement and decide if it works as is or if it should be modified in some way. The council decided not to modify the current mission/vision statements at this point.

The question was raised if the focus of the office was for women only or did it include girls. The council decided to focus on all females.

Guiding Principles/ Key Initiatives Discussion

Questions or ideas from Mr. Peoples; what's going to be our focus; what's going to be our work product:

- ❖ Women's Health Summit
- ❖ Data surrounding Prevention/ Health care cost, morbidity and mortality rates
- ❖ Mental Health
- ❖ Depression/Stress

Dr. Lesa mentioned that DHR could get most data, as well as connect with the CDC. She mentioned that chronic diseases are killing 40,000 Georgians yearly, with cardiovascular disease leading the way. She stated that this is why the Governor's office and DHR joined forces in 2005 to promote Live Healthy Georgia.

Mr. Peoples mentioned that if the council saw programs that need to be leveraged better or enhanced then those recommendations could be made in the plan.

The question was raised who does the council serve. James responded that the council serves the Governor, the General Assembly, the Commissioner and DCH. The council also wanted to know if the group ever meets as a whole with the Governor. Mr. Peoples responded that he wasn't sure if the entire council has ever met with the Governor.

Several advisory council members asked the question what do we want to be remembered for in our efforts to serve the women of Georgia.

An example was given from Jaime Kaplan. She spoke about a program in Macon adopted from Australia called 10,000 steps. She felt this was a tangible program that could be taken to the entire state.

Sarah Lang mentioned the National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health. She stated that there is one National Community Center of Excellence in GA, located in Atlanta at Oakhurst Medical Center. She asked that staff explore any opportunities to partner with Oakhurst Center of Excellence.

The council asked staff to provide the following data/information: current health status of GA Women; past copies of strategic plan developed by the Office of Women's Health, mental health data, suicide prevention data, morbidity & mortality stats and chronic diseases.

Future Meetings

The council decided to have meetings once a month for approximately 3 months. Dr. Lesa mentioned when the council might meet with the Commissioner. Mr. Peoples suggested that later in the year would be a good time to meet with the Commissioner as the department develops its budget.

The council decided to schedule the next meeting for Tuesday, March 24th from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. They also decided to meet Tuesday, May 22nd from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meeting dates have been set for 4th Tuesday of each month.

Mr. Peoples asked the group to let us know how they would like to be represented on the letter head. He also asked everyone to sign the Oath of Office.

Meeting Adjourned.